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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/825,717	04/04/2001	Richard W. Stoakley	MFCP.76395	3160

45809 7590 09/07/2005

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EXAMINER	
ZHOU, TING	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2173	

DATE MAILED: 09/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/825,717	STOAKLEY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ting Zhou	2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *08 August 2005*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2 and 4-21* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,2 and 4-21* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendment filed on 8 August 2005 have been received and entered. Claims 1-2 and 4-21 as amended are pending in the application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 15-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 15 recites the limitation "retrieving a notification item that corresponds to a *notification item icon displayed in the notification* area", on lines 4-5 and the limitation "in a display area *apart from the notification area, displaying the notification item icon*", on lines 6-7. These two limitations are essentially contradicting each other because the first limitation states that the notification item icon is displayed in the notification area and the second limitation states that the notification item icon is displayed in an area that is apart from the notification area; it is unclear if the notification item icon is actually displayed in the notification area, apart from the notification area, or if there are two identical icons being displayed with one in the area and one outside of the area.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-2 and 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moon et al. U.S. Patent 6,385,662 (hereinafter "Moon") and Cecchini et al. U.S. Patent 5,790,122 (hereinafter "Cecchini").

Referring to claim 1, Moon teaches a method in a computer system for organizing and displaying notification items associated with corresponding notifications on a display (icons and application launch buttons associated with the system applications, displayed on the status bar, as shown by reference character "115" in Figure 1) having a notification area (status bar shown by reference character "121" in Figure 1) (Moon: column 4, lines 17-22 and 56-60) comprising identifying an item associated with a notification area icon, wherein the notification area icon represents a particular instance of an event or process (for example, if an email message arrives, a notification icon identifying the email application is sent to the status bar, the notification icon representing a particular instance, i.e. email application, of an event or process, i.e. notification request) (Moon: column 4, lines 20-30 and 56-60) and monitoring an interval of time associated with an activity of the item (monitoring whether the user has selected the message icon within a fixed time period) (Moon: column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13), and hiding the notification area icon from view after a predetermined interval of time (if the user has not selected the message icon after a fixed time period, the message icon is hidden, or disappears) (Moon:

column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13). However, although Moon teaches redisplaying the notifications upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the hidden notifications (when the user wishes to respond to an event, the history icon can be selected and the history file displaying the events accessed) (Moon: column 5, lines 7-9), Moon fails to explicitly teach upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the notification area icon, redisplaying the notification area icon in the notification area. Cecchini teaches a computer user interface that hides icons (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20) similar to that of Moon. In addition, Cecchini further teaches upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the notification area icon, redisplaying the notification area icon in the notification area (upon receipt of a user's desire to view the hidden icons, i.e. a pointer is positioned by the user, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Moon and Cecchini before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user interface hiding a notification icon after a predetermined interval of time taught by Moon to include the redisplaying of the hidden icons upon user input of Cecchini. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to reduce screen clutter and maximize utilization of precious screen space.

Referring to claim 2, Moon, as modified, teaches arranging the notification area items (message icons) in the order in which the notifications occur (as more notifications are received, they are each displayed on the status bar) (Moon: column 3, lines 10-13 and column 4, lines 17-22).

Referring to claim 4, Moon, as modified, teaches determining the occurrence of activity on the monitored and hidden item, and revealing the item by redisplaying the item upon the

occurrence of activity (monitoring the hidden icons for pointer activity, at which time, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18).

Referring to claim 5, Moon, as modified, teach revealing the icons in order of the most recently active application through display of the notification icons that has the most recent level of activity. When the user selects the history icon, a history file showing an event log of hidden messages are displayed with information such as time, date, etc. (Moon: column 5, lines 39-50); therefore, the user can respond to the event messages according to the most recently active application, or the most recent event message.

Referring to claim 6, Moon, as modified, teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 1 (personal communication assistant "PCA") (column 1, lines 6-15).

Referring to claim 7, Moon, as modified, teach a computer system having a processor, memory, and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 1 (personal communication assistant "PCA") (column 1, lines 6-15).

Referring to claim 8, Moon teaches a method comprising displaying each of the notification items in the notification area (for example, if an email message arrives, a notification icon identifying the email application is sent to the status bar, the notification icon representing a particular instance, i.e. email application, of an event or process, i.e. notification request) (Moon: column 4, lines 20-30 and 56-60); hiding inactive notification item icons that meet a preset threshold of inactivity (if the user does not select an event, or message icon in the history file, the history file is hidden to allow the user to return to the current application, thereby hiding each

message representing event notifications in the history file), retrieving a chevron icon (displaying a history icon) (Moon: column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 4 and column 5, lines 39-50). However, although Moon teaches redisplaying the notifications upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the hidden notifications (when the user wishes to respond to an event, the history icon can be selected and the history file displaying the events accessed) (Moon: column 5, lines 7-9) and removing the chevron icon when there are no more hidden items (removing the history icon once the user's response is complete, i.e., there are no more messages in the history file) (Moon: column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 4 and column 5, lines 39-50), Moon fails to explicitly teach upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the hidden notification area icons, repeating the displaying each of the notification item icons in the notification area. Cecchini teaches a computer user interface that hides icons (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20) similar to that of Moon. In addition, Cecchini further teaches upon receipt of a user input indicating a desire to view the hidden notification area icons, repeating the displaying each of the notification item icons in the notification area (upon receipt of a user's desire to view the hidden icons, i.e. a pointer is positioned by the user, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18) (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Moon and Cecchini before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user interface hiding a notification icon after a predetermined interval of time taught by Moon to include the redisplaying of the hidden icons upon user input of Cecchini. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to reduce screen clutter and maximize utilization of precious screen space.

Referring to claim 9, Moon, as modified, teach receiving a chevron entry selection signal indicative of user selection of the chevron icon, and in response to the chevron selection signal, displaying each of the hidden notification items on the display (Moon teaches receiving user selection of the history icon and displaying the hidden history file and consequently the messages representing event notifications within the history file; furthermore, Cecchini teaches that upon receipt of a user's desire to view the hidden icons, i.e. a pointer is positioned by the user, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Moon: column 4, lines 39-50; Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18).

Referring to claim 10, Moon, as modified, teach the unhide criteria being met when an entry selection signal indicative of a user selection of the notification item icon is selected by the user from the displayed, previously hidden icons (Moon teaches that when the user selects the history icon, therefore satisfying an unhide criteria, the previously hidden history file and consequently the messages representing event notifications within the history file, are displayed to the user; furthermore, Cecchini teaches that upon receipt of a user's desire to view the hidden icons, i.e. a pointer is positioned by the user, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Moon: column 4, lines 39-50; Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18).

Referring to claim 11, Moon, as modified, teach displaying the notification item icon in the notification area on the display in response to the selection (upon receipt of a user's desire to view the hidden icons, i.e. a pointer is positioned by the user, the hidden icons become visible, i.e. are redisplayed) (Cecchini: column 1, lines 12-20 and column 3, lines 3-18).

Referring to claim 12, Moon, as modified, teach the notification item icon is placed to the far left of the notification area (the message or notification display area represented by character 121 is on the left hand side of the notification area, or status bar represented by reference character 120, shown in Figure 1 of Moon).

Referring to claim 13, Moon, as modified, teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 8 (personal communication assistant "PCA") (Moon: column 1, lines 6-15).

Referring to claim 14, Moon, as modified, teach a computer system having a processor, memory, and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 8 (personal communication assistant "PCA") (Moon: column 1, lines 6-15).

4. Claims 15-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oran et al. U.S. Patent 5,757,371 (hereinafter "Oran") and Moon et al. U.S. Patent 6,385,662 (hereinafter "Moon").

Referring to claim 15, as best understood by the examiner, Oran teaches a system having a graphical user interface including a display (Oran: column 1, line 66 - column 2, line 1) and a method of providing and selecting options for configuring notification items within a notification area (Oran: column 3, lines 1-11). This can further be seen from Figure 14. Specifically, Oran teaches a method comprising retrieving a notification item that corresponds to a notification item icon displayed in the notification area (the notification items, or visual indicators on the taskbar, such as the clock notification item 34 shown in Figure 14, is retrieved, i.e. displayed via a button, i.e. an icon on the taskbar) (Oran: Figures 14); displaying the notification item icon (the

notification items are displayed on the taskbar via selectable buttons, i.e. icons) (Oran: Figure 14); in a display area apart from the notification area, displaying a description associated with the notification item and a hiding behavior characteristic to be associated with the notification item (the "Taskbar Properties" configuration box shown in Figures 14 and 15A-15B shows a listing of options associated with the notification items and user selectable hiding behaviors to be associated with notification items on, such as automatically hiding a notification item, via hiding the taskbar, or hiding the clock by unselecting "Show Clock" for the clock notification item) (Oran: column 8, lines 52-67 and column 9, lines 10-12); providing a set of user selectable hiding behaviors to be associated with the notification item (as shown in Figure 15B, user selectable hiding behaviors associated with notification items on the taskbar can be selected by the user, such as automatically hiding a notification item, via hiding the taskbar, or hiding the clock) (Oran: column 8, lines 52-67 and column 9, lines 10-12); and repeating the retrieving, the displaying and the providing step for each of the items that are added to the notification area until each of the notification area items are displayed in the display area (the retrieving, displaying and providing step is performed for each of the notification items displayed on the taskbar; for example, as shown in Figure 14, there are two displayed, i.e. retrieved notification items, namely "Start" 32 and the clock 34; the Taskbar Properties box displays a selectable hiding behavior to be associated for each of the two displayed items in that the clock can be selected to be hidden via "Show Clock" and the start item can be selected to be hidden via "Auto Hide") (Oran: column 9, lines 10-17). However, although Oran teaches user selectable hiding behaviors, Oran fails to explicitly teach at least one of the user selectable hiding behaviors includes hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met. Moon

teaches an interface that displays notification item icons associated with corresponding notifications on a notification area of a display (status bar shown by reference character 121 in Figure 1 of Moon) similar to that of Oran. In addition, Moon further teaches hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met (if the user has not selected the message icon after a fixed time period, the message icon is hidden, or disappears) (Moon: column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran and Moon before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user selectable hiding behaviors of Oran to include the hiding behaviors of hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met, taught by Moon. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to be able to display more information on a portable device with a limited display area, such a personal communication assistants (PCA); furthermore, it provides users with the option and flexibility of postponing response and/or action to an event until a more convenient time.

Referring to claim 16, Oran, as modified, teach a selection signal indicative of a user selection of a choice of behavior for a notification item (check mark next to behavior) (Oran: Figure 14).

Referring to claim 17, Oran, as modified, teach a method to reset the behavior associated with each notification item to a default state (the start menu has a default behavior of containing certain menu items; also, the "Taskbar Properties" box has a default value when first displayed, for example, no items checked) (Oran: column 9, lines 44-45 and column 10, lines 21-23).

Referring to claim 18, Oran, as modified, teach display of the notification icon, description and behavior on the display includes displaying the item in an order associated with

the appearance of the item in the notification area (users can click on each of the notification item icons in the order in which it appears, thereby displaying the notification items in the order it appears in the notification area), as shown by Figure 8 of Oran.

Referring to claim 19, Oran, as modified, teach a predetermined maximum upon which no more items can be added (at most, the taskbar can only occupy half of the graphical user interface, therefore, there is a maximum number of items that can be added to the taskbar) (Oran: column 7, lines 43-45). Therefore, if more items are to be added, it would be obvious to replace the oldest items first, in order to allow users to keep the most up to date items in the display area, giving users access to items they are more likely to use.

Referring to claim 20, Oran, as modified, teach a computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 15 (Oran: column 5, lines 18-27).

Referring to claim 21, Oran, as modified, teach a computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 15 (Oran: column 5, lines 18-27).

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-2 and 4-14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

6. Applicant's arguments filed 8 August 2005, with respect to claims 15-21 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive: The applicant argues that the taskbar interface taught by

Oran neither displays each of the user's notification icons nor provides user selectable hiding behaviors for each of the notification. The examiner respectfully disagrees. As shown in Figures 14 and 15A-15B, each of the user's notification icons are displayed on the taskbar (in these figures, are there are two notification items, start 32 and clock 34). Furthermore, the taskbar properties box, which is displayed in a separate area from the taskbar, provides hiding behaviors that can be selected by the user, such as "Show Clock" for the displayed clock notification 34 and "Auto Hide" for the displayed Start notification 32; since "Auto Hide" hides the taskbar, and consequently the notifications such as Start 32, it provides hiding behaviors for the "Start" notification; therefore, as shown by the above example, the Taskbar Properties box provides selectable hiding behaviors for each of the two displayed notifications in Figures 14 and 15A-15B.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ting Zhou whose telephone number is (571) 272-4058. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:00 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca can be reached at (571) 272-4048. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TZ

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